

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

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TO SECSTATE WASHDC 1348
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AMEMBASSY LISBON
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USNMR SHAPE BE
USDOCOSOUTH NAPLES IT
AMEMBASSY BRUSSELS

C O N F I D E N T I A L USNATO 04557

E.O. 11652: XGDS-1
TAGS: MPOL, NATO
SUBJECT: SYG LUNS' ABORTIVE VISIT TO GIBRALTAR

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1. SPANISH SENSITIVITIES ABOUT GIBRALTAR SURFACED OVER THE MAY DAY WEEKEND AFTER THE UK INFORMED SPAIN THAT SYG LUNS WAS PLANNING TO VISIT GIBRALTAR MAY 3-4 EN ROUTE TO THE CARRIER NIMITZ, TO OBSERVE NATO EXERCISE OPEN GATE. SPANISH AMBASSADOR TO BELGIUM AGUIRRE SUGGESTED TO LUNS UNDER INSTRUCTIONS THAT DOING SO MIGHT CREATE DIFFICULTIES AND THAT SUCH A VISIT WOULD BE BADLY RECEIVED IN SPAIN. BECAUSE SYG LUNS WAS A PASSENGER IN THE USAF C-140 TAKING THREE MEMBERS OF THE MILITARY COMMITTEE TO THE EXERCISE, AFTER CONSULTATION WITH THE JCS, THE US MILREP REROUTED THE PLANE TO LISBON FOR TRANSFER BY USN AIRCRAFT TO THE NIMITZ.

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2. SINCE THE NIMITZ IN THE MED ON MAY 3 WAS UNDER COMGIBMED, A NATO HEADQUARTERS IN GIBRALTAR, ORIGINALLY LUNS AND PARTY WERE INVITED TO TRANSIT GIBRALTAR AS MOST CONVENIENT SPOT TO SHIFT AIRPLANES. TIMING INVOLVED AN OVERNIGHT STAY WHICH THE BRITISH CONVERTED TO A CALL ON THE ACTING GOVERNOR, BRIEFINGS, A VISIT TO THE ROCK, AND

BLACK TIE DINNER.

3. THE BRITISH AMBASSADOR IN MADRID INFORMED THE SPANISH GOVERNMENT OF THE PROJECTED VISIT. THE RESULT WAS AGUIRRE'S APRIL 28 APPROACH TO LUNS THROUGH CHEF DE CABINET VAN CAMPEN. AFTER SOME QUICK REARRANGING AND A STATEMENT FROM THE ACTING UK PERMREP THAT THE FOREIGN OFFICE WOULD HAVE NO OBJECTION TO CANCELING THE GIBRALTAR TRANSIT STOP, A DECISION WAS MADE TO TRANSIT VIA LISBON IN BOTH DIRECTIONS INSTEAD OF GIBRALTAR. COMIBERLANT, THE NATO HEADQUARTERS IN LISBON, HANDLED THE LISBON ARRANGEMENTS AS THE HEADQUARTERS PARALLEL TO COMGIBMED BUT UNDER SACLANT.

4. AT A PRIVATE MEETING OF NATO PERMREPS ON ANOTHER SUBJECT ON MAY 2, LUNS SAID HE WOULD BE EMBARKING VIA LISBON. HE DID NOT WISH, HE NOTED, TO GIVE THE SPANISH A DROIT DE REGARD OVER WHO FROM NATO GOES TO GIBRALTAR AND WHO DOES NOT BUT HE WAS IN THE HANDS OF THOSE PLANNING THE EXERCISE. HE, HIMSELF, WAS NOT CHOOSING WHERE TO GO. UK PERMREP KILLICK OBSERVED THAT THE UK AMBASSADOR IN MADRID HAD INFORMED SPAIN OF THE VISIT "AS A COURTESY." GLITMAN

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